

FATALITY



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS III CORPS AND FORT HOOD
FORT HOOD, TEXAS 76544-5056



AFZF-GA-SAFE

26 NOV '01

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: POV Accident/Fatality Prevention – Fatality Memo 02-03

1. Over the Thanksgiving Holiday weekend, another tragic POV accident took the lives of two III Corps soldiers. These two POV deaths are the third and fourth for this fiscal year. The local authorities are still investigating the circumstance of this incident. However, initial information indicates that excessive speed and alcohol were involved in this double-fatality case. The soldiers were allegedly drag racing another automobile on a city street in the early morning hours. The driver lost control of his vehicle which overturned, killing both soldiers instantaneously. The Justice of the Peace pronounced both soldiers dead at the scene.

2. If we continue this adverse POV fatality trend, we will surpass last fiscal year's total number of POV fatalities of 27 within the Corps. More importantly, continuing this trend brings more unnecessary, heart-wrenching grief to family and friends. Losing a loved one or a friend is always a tragic, stressful event. This is only exacerbated when such a loss occurs during an American holiday season that is traditionally celebrated with family and friends. The fact that almost every POV accident is preventable compounds the pain of the unfortunate situation.

3. For decades, automobile accident statistics have proven that excessive speed, fatigue, alcohol, and not wearing seat belts are major contributing factors of vehicle accidents, injuries, and fatalities. In other words – most accidents, injuries, and fatalities are preventable. They are preventable if drivers don't speed, don't drive while fatigued, don't drive when they are drinking, and are always wearing seat belts. Our first line supervisors -- lieutenants and sergeants -- are our best defense against this tragic loss of life. Empower and demand that your first line supervisors meaningfully impact on the vehicle operational behaviors of our young soldiers. This is a responsibility of leadership.

4. POV dangers are similar to military vehicle dangers. Operating a truck/truck at excessive speed or while fatigued can also result in an accident. However, we have relatively few military vehicle accidents because then we are focused on the mission, with leader oversight allowing little room for error. Successful POV operation also requires proper focus and personal discipline and has little room for error, and an engaged leadership must remain in oversight.

ENSURE WIDEST DISSEMINATION AND POST ON BULLETIN BOARD

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. B. Bell".

B. B. BELL
Lieutenant General, USA
Commanding

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